

THE JACOBS REPORT

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STEM CELL MISSION GROWING

BiPartisan Coalition Tackles Misinformation

Michigan Citizens for Stem Cell Research & Cures, a newly formed coalition, is on a mission to set the record straight by educating the public about stem cell research. Their biggest challenge is to convince citizens that embryonic stem cell research could save and improve lives, while discrediting the contention that such practices involve human cloning.

Led by U.S. Senator Carl Levin (D-Detroit) and U.S. Rep. Joe Schwarz (R-Battle Creek), the coalition is composed of researchers from Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, private citizens and the bio-tech industry.

“I can’t think of anything more pro life . . . than to take embryos, which are going to be destroyed anyway, and to use them for a life giving purpose at least potentially,” reasoned Levin.

Also lending support to the effort is former Republican House Speaker Rick Johnson. The pro-life ex-legislator referred to his totally disabled brother as he called on Michigan citizens to revisit the issue of what pro-life really is.

According to Senator Levin, the focus of this new group will not be to lobby the Legislature for change. Rather, they will create a speaker’s bureau, print brochures, and sponsor education forums to get the message out about the positive benefits of this form of research. MCSCRC’s goal is to present the facts necessary so each individual can form their own opinion about stem cell research.

In addition to the human health implications, Levin and Schwarz contend there are economic ramifications, as well. With a higher education system that is the best in the nation, Michigan could easily attract new hi-tech jobs in this field if it grew into a more research friendly state.

Michigan’s current laws on stem cell research are considered within the scientific community to be more restrictive than federal laws and policies enacted by many other states. In Michigan, embryonic stem cell research can only be done to promote the viability of the embryo in question. This prohibits researchers in Michigan from creating stem cells from embryos, including unused embryos routinely discarded from fertility clinics.

If Michigan does not do this research, other states will.

“Michigan Citizens for Stem Cell Research & Cures is a group of forward-thinking Michigan citizens dedicated to the long-term goal of educating our state’s residents about the stem cell

research process and its potential for life-saving cures,” said Senator Gilda Z. Jacobs (D-Huntington Woods).

Please visit their website at: <http://www.stemcellresearchformichigan.com>

EMERGENCY WEBSITE UP AND RUNNING

Michigan Offers Info on Emergency Preparedness

A new state web site specifically designed to provide proactive emergency planning information for individuals, families, and businesses made its electronic debut today, marking a critical point in the state’s effort to educate the public on what to do during a potential crisis.

“Effective planning and preparation can help ensure Michigan citizens are safe in a time of emergency,” said Governor Jennifer M. Granholm. “Our state’s new web site can help in that preparation.”

The web site – www.michigan.gov/prepare - offers citizens the latest available information on family preparedness, chemical, biological, and radiological emergencies, natural disasters, and severe weather. The site features state resources, as well as links to other federal assets that are considered the last word for family emergency preparedness. The site is a compilation of resources from multiple state agencies – all of whom have contributed content for emergency preparedness – including the Michigan State Police and its Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division, and the Michigan Departments of Community Health (MDCH), Agriculture (MDA), Environmental Quality (DEQ), and Natural Resources (DNR).

“The debut of this web site is especially timely given that September is National Preparedness Month,” stated Col. Peter C. Munoz, Director of the Michigan State Police and State Director of Emergency Management and Homeland Security. “During this month, I encourage all citizens to take a few moments to review the valuable resources available on this site.”

“Through www.michigan.gov/prepare, individuals can access a wide range of health information,” said Janet Olszewski, MDCH Director. “We want this web site to be the first place citizens around the state visit to protect themselves both before and during a potential crisis.”

Olszewski said Michigan also is undertaking a marketing campaign with television, radio, and print advertising to make citizens aware that the new web site exists. Television and radio commercials for the new web site began today around the state.

"It is important for all of us to be prepared for accidents that can jeopardize the health of our families," said DEQ Director Steven E. Chester. "By better understanding how to respond to an emergency situation, we can all help to keep Michigan safe."

"Utilizing the food safety guidelines found on this web site will help protect Michigan families from farm to fork," said Mitch Irwin, MDA director. "Preserving the viability of the state's food supply is MDA's top priority as evidenced by the recent E.coli outbreak."

WIT, WISDOM, ETC . . .

Quotables

“Half of the American people have never read a newspaper. Half never voted for President. One hopes it is the same half.”

-Gore Vidal

“An economist is a man who states the obvious in terms of the incomprehensible.”

-Alfred A. Knopf

Quote of the Week: Eugene McCarthy

“Being in politics is like being a football coach. You have to be smart enough to understand the game, and dumb enough to think it’s important.”

All Michigan legislation can be tracked at <http://www.legislature.michigan.gov/>.

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State Senator Gilda Jacobs represents the 14th Senate District, which includes Beverly Hills, Bingham Farms, Farmington, Farmington Hills, Ferndale, Franklin, Hazel Park, Huntington Woods, Lathrup Village, Oak Park, Pleasant Ridge, Royal Oak Township, Southfield, and Southfield Township. She is the Minority Vice Chair of the Families & Human Services Committee and the Economic Development, Small Business & Regulatory Reform Committee. She also serves on the Government Operations and Health Policy Committees.

Constituents of the 14th District may contact Senator Jacobs at sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov or toll-free at 1-888-937-4453.

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